

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9367

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 502

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, HA

SUBJECT: DUVALIER MAUSOLEUM DECISION

REF: PAUP 461

1. PRESIDENT DUVALIER'S DECISION NOT TO BURY HIS FATHER IN THE MAUSOLEUM BUILT FOR THAT PURPOSE, AND INSTEAD TO USE THE BUILDING EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE NEWLY CREATED MUSEUM OF THE HAITIAN NATION, EVIDENTLY WAS A TOTALLY PERSONAL AND PRIVATE ONE. PERSONS WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES PALACE INSIDERS PROFESS TO HAVE BEEN CAUGHT UNAWARE BY IT, AND ARE STILL TRYING TO FATHOM ITS SIGNIFICANCE. UNTIL DUVALIER EXPLAINS HIMSELF FURTHER PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY, WE MAKE THE FOLLOWING LIMITED OBSERVATIONS:

2. CULT OF PERSONALITY - DUVALIER HAS TAKEN A MAJOR STEP TO DEFLATE THE CULT OF PERSONALITY SURROUNDING HIS FATHER, WITH WHICH HE PRIVATELY CLAIMED TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE. IN CLAIMING THAT HIS FATHER WISHED TO BE REMEMBERED AS A HUMBLE COUNTRY DOCTOR, DUVALIER REBUFFED BOTH HIS MOTHER (WHO HAD DEFENDED THE MAUSOLEUM) AND THE SYCOPHANTS WHO ORBIT AROUND HERE. THE MAUSOLEUM DECISION IS A CLEAR SIGNAL THAT HAITIAN HISTORY DID NOT END WITH DUVALIER PERE, AND THAT THE YOUNG PRESIDENT FOR LIFE PLANS TO MAKE A FAIR SHARE OF IT HIMSELF. THE SON IS EMERGING FROM THE SHADOW STILL CAST FROM THE GRAVEYARD.

3. PUBLIC OPINION - THE DECISION ALSO SHOWS THAT DUVALIER IS SENSITIVE TO DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PUBLIC OPINION. IT WAS WIDELY  
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APPLAUDED IN HAITI BOTH BY CRITICS AND THE PRESIDENT'S MORE

PROGRESSIVE SUPPORTERS, LEAVING ONLY DUVALIERIST HANGERS-ON WORRIED ABOUT ITS PORTENT FOR THEIR INDIVIDUAL FUTURES. IN TERMS OF FOREIGN, PARTICULARLY US PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL OPINION, IT SHOULD HELP TO DEFUSE CRITICISM DIRECTED AGAINST DUVALIER FOR DEDICATING AN EXPENSIVE MONUMENT TO HIS FATHER WHILE HIS GOVERNMENT SEEKS SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FROM DONOR NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL LENDING AGENCIES. DUVALIER HAS NOW MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE NEVER WANTED THE MAUSOLEUM TO BEGIN WITH.

4. MARIE-DENISE - THE DECISION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE REALISTIC VIEWS, AND PRESUMABLY HAS THE BACKING, OF DUVALIER'S ELDEST SISTER, MARIE-DENISE DOMINIQUE, HOW HAS REMAINED IN PORT-AU-PRINCE SINCE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

5. VOUDOU ANGLE - IN THE LOCAL GOSSIP MILL, THE DECISION BOLSTERS THE CONTENTION OF MANY VOUDOU ADHERENTS THAT EITHER FRANCOIS DUVALIER NEVER REALLY DIED, OR THAT HIS BODY HAS DISAPPEARED FROM ITS GRAVE AT THE CITY CEMETERY. HOWEVER, IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THIS KIND OF FANTASY HAS ANY REAL POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

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